

New War and Old Ethics

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"THOU shalt not kill." Thus the Almighty has set His canon against human slaughter of every kind, reserving to Himself alone the right of terminating the lives on earth of the rational beings to whom He gives existence. Murder is, therefore, an insolent defiance of God's supreme dominion, as well as a violation of His creatures' primary right—the right to live. It is also a grievous sin against the two great commandments of the Law, the love of God and of the neighbor. Yet the taking of human life is not always murder: it is justified when man acts with God's authority, as when the Chosen People exterminated various heathen tribes in Palestine. And in the New Dispensation "the power of the sword" is vindicated for the civil authority by the Apostle Paul, whilst the Christian Church has always upheld, both for the State and the individual, the right of self-defence against an unjust aggressor, even to the extent of causing death.

On this right is ultimately based the practice of legitimate warfare, which is essentially the protection of some important and certain right against unjust attack or the vindication of some similarly weighty claim unjustly opposed. But just as from the days of Cain onwards the world has always been full of criminal disregard of God's prohibition of murder, so war between nations has too commonly been undertaken without the needful warrant of justice. When asked why he had invaded Silesia in a time of entire peace, Frederick the Great gave the following reasons—"The vivacity of my temperament, my well-filled war-chest, a favorable opportunity, and an ambition for glory." These are the words of a godless cynic, but equally immoral grounds have lain at the basis of most international struggles. War always originates in injustice on one side or the other, or, indeed, on both, and man, though endowed with reason, has constantly preferred to be led by passion and to settle his disputes like the irrational creation by the arbitrament of force. Wherever Chris-

tian principles are unheeded, the mere possession of power is held to justify the use of it to enforce its possessor's will and to advance his interests. This immoral persuasion, which it was hoped that the Great War would banish for ever, is to-day more widespread and vocal than ever. In his great farewell speech in May 18, in the Albert Hall, Mr. Baldwin said:

Freedom for common men, which was to have been the fruit of victory, is once more in jeopardy in our own land because it has been taken away from the common men of other lands . . . what is clear is that today Europe is neither at war nor at peace, but stands at armed attention. For every soldier that died at the Front another stands in his place; for every ship sent to the bottom of the sea, another rides the waves; for every airplane brought down to earth twenty new ones sail the skies . . . what is much worse is this: peace in some quarters is proclaimed as a bad dream, and war sanctified as an ideal for rational men.

Unless there is a recognition of Christian principles in international dealings, as Mr. Baldwin frankly confessed, the gloom of this picture must be intensified. Although war has always hitherto been regarded as a relic of barbarism, an abandonment of civilized processes in favor of those of the jungle, we find that, instead of being scouted as an instrument of national policy according to the widely-signed Kellogg Pact, the dictators have now put it in the forefront of their dealings with other nations, dragging the rest of the world with them in their journey towards the abyss. We are told that the "war-index" of the last quarter-century is eight times greater than that of those that are gone: civilization is manifestly receding towards a pre-Christian level—a natural result of the practical abandonment of Christian standards. Is there no means of arresting this ominous decline? We can at least call attention to it as earnestly as possible.

We cannot be surprised that, in despair of making their rulers realize this their peril, many earnest Christians are seeking the short cut of denouncing war as essentially immoral and pledging themselves to have nothing to do with it. It would, indeed, simplify matters if the whole force of Christian belief and sentiment could be directed against warfare as something *per se* sinful, something to be avoided under pain of eternal damnation. However, if all genuine Christians had thus to refuse to bear or use arms against their fellows, the immediate result would probably be a con-

siderable decrease of armed forces in lands at least nominally Christian, but a subsequent concentration of force in the hands of non-Christian and anti-Christian communities and a speedy destruction of Christian civilization. It is bad enough now, when, as in Spain, there are still some champions of Christendom determined not to let Antichrist have his way in their country. But extreme pacifism would not only have worse results than the desperate disease it aims at curing, but is also demonstrably in contradiction to natural reason. And nothing irrational can form a sound basis for policy; nor, for that matter, be found recommended or enjoined in the supremely wise teaching of Christ. Without maintaining the right of self-defence national communities could not subsist, and even the precarious and imperfect international order of today would dissolve into chaos. Yet on April 5 some hundreds of pacifist Anglicans, lay and clerical, presented a resolution at Lambeth Palace which opened with the declaration of their "passionate conviction that Jesus Christ would refuse in any cause whatever to employ the methods of modern war," and ended by urging "all members of the Church to maintain that war is essentially evil."

Moreover, we occasionally meet amongst Catholics, who should know better, traces of the same unsound and irrational pacifism—a denunciation of the use of force to defend Christianity as something definitely un-Christian! "Are we to fight Communism," we read in a little American publication,¹ "as it is being done in Spain—by brother killing brother? God forbid!" This is a typical specimen of confused thinking. General Franco is not fighting Communism, but Communists, whose aim is to extirpate all those who share the faith and practice of Catholic Spain, as they have already done in Madrid, in Barcelona and in all the Red territory. Only when that murderous assault has been successfully overcome will he be able to "fight Communism," as he is already doing in Nationalist Spain, by destroying the social injustice from which it largely springs. The American writer apparently shares the shallow and false historical generalization—"force never settles anything." One would have thought that all educated folk knew that armed violence has settled once for all quite a number of things—whether Spain, for instance, should become a Mohammedan

¹ *The Social Justice Bulletin*, December, 1936, p. 2.

State, or whether the Turk should complete the conquest of Europe. Are we to say that the great Dominican, Pope St. Pius V, who, by organizing the League that won Lepanto, put an end to the Turkish menace in the Mediterranean, or John Sobleski who finally drove the Turk out of Hungary, or St. Joan of Arc who broke the English power in France, settled nothing once for all? In the New Dispensation, almost as openly as in the Old, Almighty God can be seen to have used human warfare, in spite of the imperfection of the instrument, to accomplish His beneficent purposes.

We may readily grant that the use of force is contrary to the ideal of Christianity, for if Christianity became real and universal, men would be guided by reason and faith, evil passions and impulses would be under control, and force would be unnecessary. But the conjectured conduct of Our Lord in conditions which He did not encounter, being excluded from His experience by the purpose of His Coming, His status as a Victim and the necessary limitations of His mortal existence, is constantly and improperly appealed to by pacifists. Christ would not organize an army: still less would Christ actually fight: if, then, we would be His followers, we must adopt His spirit. The appeal is unreasonable, for the right of self-defence, and the duty, on occasion, of defending the State, are derived from the law of nature which Christ did not abrogate but fulfilled. Nor did He legislate directly for the community—a purely temporal entity—but for the individual. He refused to assume earthly Kingship. He did not teach how States should be governed but how souls should be saved. Accordingly, the statement from the American periodical already mentioned—"The teachings of Christ, His example during His public ministry and the organization of the Christian Church in apostolic times most certainly eliminated force as a possible method of settling disputes of any kind"—finds no support in Catholic teaching or tradition, early or late.

One would not thus elaborate what is, after all, an elementary point of Christian morality, were it not that Catholics, so opposed for one reason or another to the policies of General Franco as to be ready to make cause with virulent enemies of the Catholic Faith, have denied it or sought to evade its force by mystical word-spinning. The Spanish conflict, however, has raised moral issues which are more debat-

able concerning the intervention of outsiders and the methods of modern warfare. To begin with, how far is it morally permissible for a person to take sides, either in person or by supplying war-material, in any conflict in which his own country is not involved? He can actively support his own nation in war only when he is morally certain that it is in the right; may he volunteer to help another nation, or a section of any other nation, if he really thinks that thus he is forwarding the cause of justice? The question is important for, unrighteous war being mass-murder, one cannot lightly run the risk of sinning so greatly, just for love of adventure or for political sympathy or for a monetary reward. One is doubly bound to make sure of the justice of a cause, which no motives of patriotism bind one to support. Yet I wonder whether many of the "volunteers" on either side in Spain have given this question a moment's thought and taken means to set their consciences right before taking Communist or Nationalist pay? The matter, to be sure, would hardly trouble unbelievers, whilst those on Franco's side have the visible assurance that they are fighting for religion, law, order, and the restoration and development of an historic Catholic culture. The issue is almost as clear as when, in 1870, volunteers from all over the world came to Rome to defend the Pope against the assailants of the Temporal Power. We may assume that a religious motive of this sort, rather than zeal for an imaginary Fascism, has inspired those who have freely given their services to the Nationalist cause.

We notice that pacifists in their denunciation of war lay stress, not without cause, on the increasing barbarity of its methods. We have traveled a long way from those dark medieval times when soldiers might be seen killing each other in one field whilst the peaceful ploughman drove his horses in the next. Now, nation is arrayed against nation, not merely national forces against national forces, and the category of non-combatant, with all the rights pertaining to it, has more and more shrunk in extent. By laws passed since the Great War, France and Poland on the declaration of war, automatically mobilize for service against the enemy their entire adult populations, men and women, thus placing them formally outside the area of protection. When we look at the Hague Convention of 1907, intended to regulate and

humanize warfare,² we realize how rapidly in the intervening three decades all attempts to restrain the savagery of modern war have been frustrated. These Conventions lay down the rights of non-combatants—security of life and private property, respect for religious conviction and practice, and for patriotic feeling, etc. They forbid the killing of prisoners, the bombardment of undefended towns, the destruction of churches, artistic monuments and places devoted to good works, the use of weapons “calculated to cause unnecessary harm”—all of which prohibitions and many others have been almost wholly swept away by the use of that devilish engine of indiscriminate destruction, which, nevertheless, all nations are planning to employ, the bombing airplane.

We have the melancholy opportunity of studying the “next war” at close range though on a small scale, in the hapless land of Spain, where, bombing and shooting from the air, as being cheaper and more effective than ordinary artillery work, are being very extensively employed. There is, indeed, no moral difference between the two processes. Granted the lawfulness of firing shells into an enemy town from a long-range gun, dropping bombs from the air cannot be forbidden on ethical grounds. Both weapons are such that they cannot discriminate between soldiers and civilians, between hospitals and hotels, or even between friend and foe. The reproach of their use at all lies on the “civilized” States which are determined to exclude no means, however cruel, of asserting their will. At one time there was a chance of a common agreement to surrender this particularly horrible method of fighting, but it was too convenient for the repressing of savage tribes in difficult country to be laid aside by those who had that task, and the opportunity passed. As for its reported abuse for the destruction of non-military centers and non-combatants by the Spanish Nationalists, the dice are so heavily loaded in the British Press against the latter as to render immediately suspect all stories of anti-Red atrocities. Even the case of the bombing of Guernica, which *The Times* (London) paraded in a long dispatch, has been subsequently reported in such contradictory fashion that the truth remains quite uncertain. Our point is that with the new conception of nation fighting nation, and with the virtual transference of campaigning from the

² A list of them is given in *A Primer of Peace and War* (C.S.G.), p. 88, § 48.

earth to the air, a state of affairs has arisen which demands a restatement of the ethics of war. Are methods of fighting which can rightly be called inhuman, also immoral? Unnecessary suffering inflicted on any sentient being constitutes the sin of cruelty. Can we eliminate, as the Hague Convention hoped to do, not suffering, which is inevitable, but cruelty from warfare? Are all violent means, calculated to overcome opposition to the assertion of undoubted rights, *eo ipso* justified? Noxious gases, expanding bullets, chain-shot, saw-bayonets, infection of drink-supplies—such abominations, forbidden at The Hague, do not greatly differ in their effects from the means now actually sanctioned—flame-throwers, hand-grenades, bayonet-thrusts, high-explosives. Where is the line to be drawn, and—who is to draw it?

Such curbing of national assertiveness and such humanizing of belligerency as have hitherto been achieved have come about through the influence of Christianity, the first law of which is love, and through the labors of Christian moralists. Christianity preaches a natural society of nations, independent of human conventions, bound together by charity as well as justice. Christian moralists have elaborated, in such detail and with such clearness, the motives that justify war, that they can be found combined only with great difficulty in any particular dispute. Today our moral theologians have the opportunity and the duty of taking into account many other factors which should make a just war less possible. An often-quoted speech of Cardinal Faulhaber, delivered just five years ago when the pathetically-unreal Disarmament Conference had started its course, provides both stimulus and guidance for that enterprise. A whole host of questions demand solution or at least clearer definition, the first and most radical of which is—Has not the time come for declaring even defensive warfare unjust because no longer inevitable? The apparatus for peaceful settlement of disputes, the World Court of International Justice, though still imperfect, needs only good will and a sincere desire of justice to function effectively. Again, does not the law of charity forbid the outbreak of an armed quarrel which cannot but have disastrous consequences to innocent neutrals, and which is bound to leave the combatants themselves in many ways worse off than when they began it? Are not nations *obliged* to seek in friendly combination the security

which they desire and which cannot be otherwise obtained? And are not individual citizens, now that the consequences of a general conflict are so clearly felt and understood, bound to exert themselves to keep public opinion averse to war? Those who have the misfortune at the moment to live in Totalitarian States which rest on a false militaristic philosophy, should at least keep their souls free from its contagion and hope for better times. The hope for world-peace, now that little can be expected from the world-rulers, rests on well-informed public opinion, convinced not only of its offence against human brotherhood but of the injustice of most of its pretexts, and the unlawful extension of its effects. The more the existing League of Nations is discredited on account of the unwillingness of most of the Great Powers to make it effective, the more we should insist upon the international solidarity, which arises from the earth and the fullness thereof belonging to the Lord of all, and the nations being His offspring. It should, above all, be made clear that no nation, in the circumstances of our day, has the right or the authority to bring about for its own interests a state of war in any quarter of the globe, except in the one case of war being the only means of saving its liberty and integrity from unjust attack. The inevitable injury thus inflicted upon its neighbors may in that instance be regarded as retribution for their failure to prevent by peaceful organization the possibility of such an attack.

Accordingly, whilst carefully avoiding the heretical doctrine that the law of God forbids self-defence on the part of nation as well as individual, we see that the cause of world-peace—the peace which the world cannot itself attain, but which Christ through the agency of Christians can bestow—demands the continued and earnest endeavors of Catholics. We have to protest against everything that tends to make warfare unjust and inhuman. We must eschew all glorification of war which in itself, although it has sometimes to be employed, is a relapse into savagery, unworthy of rational beings. We must cultivate peace in our hearts, remembering that there, at any rate, we can and should overcome evil by good. And we must demand respectfully from our spiritual authorities the guidance which we need amid the many perplexities to which new world-conditions have given rise in the dealings of nation with nation.

Catholic Action Through Jocism

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JOCISM is just now one of the most vital forms of that Catholic Action which is one of the great thoughts of the present Pontificate. Comparatively new and fresh, its spirit and methods can be likened to the work of the first Christians among the Pagans in Rome. In 1935, Jocism celebrated the tenth anniversary of its foundation, which was preceded by a long preparation. In 1912, a young Flemish priest, Joseph Cardijn, born of a working-class family on November 13, 1882, was appointed curate at Laeken (a parish in one of the suburbs of Brussels). He turned his attention immediately to the poorest sections of the working-class. He applied himself to following closely their conditions of living.

He was well fitted for this kind of task, as his father—a man of outspoken mind and firm views—educated him to realize the hardships which the workers have to undergo. When he was fourteen years old, he obtained from his father permission to study for the priesthood. Following on this, his father sent him to college to prepare for the seminary. When the young student came back home to spend his first holidays, he found that the young workers, his former friends, avoided him solely for the reason that he was to become a priest. This contempt of the young workers for the priesthood was a determining factor in the life of Canon Cardijn. The death of his father, which occurred when he was already ordained, made a lasting impression on him, as it was due to overwork. Standing beside his father's dead body, he swore to dedicate himself entirely to the welfare and the re-Christianization of the working-class.

In the course of his education for the priesthood, he studied sociological problems and spent his holidays in England in order to observe the methods and organization of the British Labor Party. As a result of his investigations, he realized that workers in general feel deeply their inferiority

to other classes. He soon concluded that it is not sufficient to take up the defense of the workers. One must first make them conscious of the dignity of their vocation, and give them enthusiasm, so that they may enjoy the fruits of life, and thus produce a lasting effect upon them.

In April, 1912, he grouped together seven young girls about thirteen or fourteen years of age. They hardly knew how to read or write, and were at work from seven in the morning until seven at night for a very poor wage. He convinced them that they could help their fellow-workers, but for that, they must train themselves to become leaders in order to exercise a decisive influence over their companions. A group of girl workers was formed and was soon followed by the formation of a group of young men who heard and obeyed the call of a leader. Minute investigations were carried on for a further period of two years by the young men and the young girls. The activities of the movement, both apostolic and social, drew inspiration from their results.

The World War did not interfere with the zeal of the promoter in continuing his work. He succeeded in keeping his movement alive in spite of countless difficulties. In 1917, Father Cardijn was sent to prison by the Germans for his patriotism. In 1918, he was imprisoned again and after trial by the military authorities he was ordered to be transferred to a German jail. Shortly before the Feast of the Sacred Heart, an Ecclesiastical authority visited the home where the girl workers were carrying on their activities in the absence of their leader. He found them praying that Canon Cardijn might be released on the Feast of the Sacred Heart (June 19, 1918). Their prayer was answered, as he was released on that very day. His whole apostleship has been marked by similar incidents. At the end of the war the movement spread gradually through the whole of Belgium. The founder of the work improved and increased the means suitable for the formation of the young workers.

Easter, 1924, after twelve years' experience, he gave a definitive Constitution to the organization and its present title, namely: *Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne* (*Young Christian Workers' Guild*) commonly known as "J. O. C." from which *Jocisme* and *Jociste* are derived. (The corresponding names in Flemish are "K.A.J." and *Kajotter*). On February 1, 1925, the young women workers adopted the constitution

of the J.O.C. The name of the girls' section of the J.O.C. is *Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne Féminine* (Young Christian Women Workers' Guild), or "J.O.C.F." All young men and women workers or future workers between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five may become members of the J.O.C. or J.O.C.F. (In Belgium, education is compulsory up to the age of fourteen years. From November, 1935, the age limit was raised to sixteen in certain large towns.) The J.O.C.'s program is founded on the Faith and on the present social structure. The worker should be given every facility to realize his eternal destiny, in the coal-mines, workshops, offices, at home, in the exercise of his rights of citizenship, and in his family life.

It is evident the present social structure prevents rather than assists individuals in attaining their eternal destiny and in practising their Faith.

For this reason the J.O.C. decided:

- (1) To undertake the complete formation of the young workers.
- (2) To transform progressively and methodically the social life of the working-classes, to promote and facilitate the spread of religion and the improvement of social and professional life.
- (3) To create organizations to defend and help the young workers in every respect.

The J.O.C. insists on the necessity of prayer and of the Sacraments. Furthermore it takes every opportunity of impressing members with the value of conforming their daily lives to their divine destiny, thus working out their salvation by every action of their day. The J.O.C.'s prayer, approved by the Hierarchy, enunciates its program. It reads as follows:

O Lord Jesus, I offer You my day's work, my labor, my trials, my joys and my sorrows. Teach me and all my fellow-workers to think with You, and to live in union with You.

Grant me grace to love You with all my heart and to serve You with my whole strength.

May Your reign be established in the factory, in the workshop and in the office as well as in our homes.

May the souls of workers who are today often in danger, find refuge in Your grace.

And by the mercy of God, may the souls of the workers who die in the honorable discharge of their duties, rest in peace.

The prayer is followed by invocations to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles.

There are, in Belgium, 2,204 parochial sections consisting of 85,000 young workers (boys and girls together) or about 15 per cent of the total number of young working people of both sexes between fourteen and twenty-five years of age, who are occupied in industry and commerce. The parochial groups are united in sixty-eight regional federations. Every parochial section and every regional federation must adapt the rules of the J.O.C. to the local and occupational requirements. The regional federations are grouped in four national federations, two for the Flemish-speaking districts and two for the French-speaking districts.

Each linguistic area has a national federation for young men and another for young women. The national federation for the young Flemish workers as well as that for the French-speaking workers (Walloons) has its headquarters in the same building. Their leaders work in strict cohesion. The same scheme has been adopted by the young women. The headquarters of both boys' and girls' federations are established in Brussels, but in different districts of the city. The two national federations, whence all orders are issued, keep in touch with the parochial sections through the regional federations, also through the 150 "propagandists" who are paid either by the national or regional federations. The propagandists visit with systematic regularity the various parts of the country to which they are appointed. Thus, we have unity of aim, of spirit and of method; also suppleness and adaptability of circumstances.

Since the J.O.C. is essentially a lay apostolic organization, it is affiliated to Catholic Action in Belgium, and a chaplain is appointed to each parochial section and to each federation. The office of the chaplain is important and one that requires great discretion. He instructs, inspires and advises. His function may be compared to that of the heart in the human body; although unseen, it is the center of vitality, on which the smallest cells depend.

The chaplain's task is to discover the young workers fit to become leaders and educators of the working-class. He must form them, help them on the lines and according to the methods of the J.O.C. By virtue of his office, he is a member of the directing committee whether parochial or regional.

The chaplain approves of the list of members who are elected to constitute the parochial committee. This committee may be reelected each year. The formation of the regional committee is conducted on similar lines. Each of the four national committees,—J.O.C. and J.O.C.F. (boy and girl Walloons) and K.A.J. and V.K.A.J. (Flemish)—consists of a chaplain general and priests appointed for each province (administrative division of the country), of the propagandist appointed by the national federations and of regional delegates. The Very Rev. J. Cardijn, Honorary Canon of the Cathedral Chapter of Malines (since 1929) was appointed National Chaplain by their Lordships, the Bishops of Belgium—a symbol of the unity of action in the country.

The parochial sections hold several meetings during the month. Members are formed for action; there are visits to working-class families, inquiries, and discussions about the activities of the J.O.C. The regional federations hold meetings four times a year. These meetings are attended by the leaders and propagandists of the parochial sections. The reports of the sections are discussed. Every effort is made to urge all members to express their opinions on the agenda. In 1936, all sections in Belgium studied the conditions of working-class families and the solution of their religious problems. The results of these regional meetings are examined during a national study week held in one of the Catholic secondary schools.

Besides this, the most promising members are given a three-day retreat each year. The response of the Jocists to these retreats and their spiritual benefits are such that priests who organize them consider them the most fruitful of their priestly functions. The J.O.C. has its own press. Copies of various periodicals, totaling 6,000,000, were either sold or distributed in Belgium in 1936. During Lent, 1936, 2,500,000 copies of a special paper were issued to all the workers inviting them to return to their Easter duty. All these papers were distributed by the Jocists who take this opportunity of getting into contact with workers.

Public entertainments are held which are intended rather for educational purposes than for amusement. These are the chief means used by the J.O.C. to raise the mental culture, the religious and moral life of the young workers.

As to the financial side, the J.O.C. is independent. It

derives means from fees paid by members, by the sale of its periodicals, educative calendars, etc., and by organizing concerts. For instance, the Bishop of Lourdes (France), in March, 1936, gave a lecture for the benefit of the J.O.C. in the most important Concert Hall of Brussels which has a seating accommodation for 2,100. Each department contrives to increase the resources of the movement on business lines.

The J.O.C. is not only a school; it supports its members by means of the diverse institutions which it has created. It advises and influences their choice of a career, inculcates habits of economy, defends their interests whenever and however it may be necessary; it concerns itself with social work, such as the health of young workers, labor risks, etc., while directing its members towards the Christian Trade-Unions. The J.O.C. has also formed camps for the unemployed. The 300,000 workers who have passed through the ranks of the J.O.C. constitute the élite of the working-class and many of these are leaders in the religious and social institutions of Belgium.

The results attained by the J.O.C. are due more especially to the intensive religious life and to the sacrifices made by the Jocists for the triumph of their movement. Many examples of generosity and unselfishness can be found among the Jocists. The J.O.C. has no martyrs in the strict sense of the word, but may count among its members many heroic souls who have done their duty to the end. For instance, a young worker who died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-one said: "I offer all my sufferings for the J.O.C. and when I am in Heaven, I will watch over all," thus emulating St. Thérèse of Lisieux, made patron Saint of the J.O.C. by our Holy Father, Pius XI. Another young worker, aged twenty-five, wrote four months before his death: "Thus, with the Pope, I offer my humble merits, that God may bless and protect the young workers, that the eight hours of factory work be not to their spiritual and moral detriment . . ." In November, 1934, Canon Cardijn presented to our Holy Father, the Pope, a record of the privations undergone by the Jocists to obtain God's blessing, for the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the J.O.C. Between January and August 25, 1935 (Jubilee), thirty-three young Jocists died offering up their sufferings for the J.O.C.

Regarding the influence of the J.O.C. on the mass of workers, there are no statistics with regard to baptisms, of the numbers of people returning to their religious duties and of conversions to the Faith. But the high esteem of the Hierarchy for the J.O.C. is a sufficient proof of the results achieved. On December 8, 1935, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Bishop of Liège solemnly baptized Jocists in the ancient Church of St. James at Liège. This ceremony, by its pomp and the circumstances under which it was held, recalls the baptism of the catechumens on Holy Saturday in Rome. In 1935, Canon Cardijn told the Jocists to stop work in the factories at 3 p. m. on Good Friday, for some minutes, to show their gratitude to our Saviour. Father Cardijn's order met with much opposition. In several factories the Jocists said their prayer privately, in others aloud, in some places the machinery was stopped. In 1936, this public acknowledgment of Christ on Good Friday was extended to more workshops and factories. Although it must be admitted that the mass of workers has not yet returned to the practice of the Faith, the J.O.C. has won sympathy and interest. On seeing the work of the J.O.C. many workers exclaim: "If that is religion, it's fine." In a great number of cases, the J.O.C. has purified the atmosphere in factories. It has increased the security of workers by compelling owners to decrease risk of accidents.

The J.O.C. has not limited its action to Belgium. In 1927 it began to work in the Communist suburbs of Paris. Now it has spread throughout France. On September 6, 1936, the Swiss J.O.C. held its first national Congress at Geneva. On August 25, 1935, the J.O.C. held its first International Congress in Brussels to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its foundation. This Jubilee International Congress was attended by 100,000 people, for the most part Jocists. There were Jocist representatives from France, Holland, Portugal, Switzerland, Colombia, Canada, and the Belgian Congo. (The late Queen Astrid, victim of a tragic accident that very week, watched the ceremony from the Royal Palace window.) The Congress was presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Van Roey, Archbishop of Malines. Present were the Apostolic Nuncio, Monsignor Micara, His Eminence Cardinal Verdier, Archbishop of Paris, His Eminence Gonzalves Cerejeira, Cardinal-Patriarch of Lisbon,

Bishop Myers representing His Excellency Archbishop Hinsley, of Westminster, the Bishops of Belgium, Mr. Van Zeeland, Prime Minister, and others of the highest rank. This Congress "is not only a date in the history of Belgium. It will stand out as a memorable date in the history of the Catholic Church." This was the verdict of His Eminence Cardinal Cerejeira.

The Holy Father has given his august approval to the J.O.C. He hopes it will extend by adapting itself to the varying situations in each country, conforming itself to the wishes of the Bishops.

In a letter addressed in the name of the Pope to Canon Cardijn, Cardinal Pacelli, Secretary of State, writes: "The J.O.C. aims at Christianizing working conditions through its organization and its methods, which are exactly adapted to that purpose, with a view to gain to our Lord Jesus Christ the souls of the young workers the more easily. It is thus seen that the thought expressed by His Holiness Pius XI in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*: 'the first apostles of the working men must themselves be workers' has been well understood."

Stating, in January, 1936, that the future was threatening, because of Bolshevism, our Holy Father added that few people are fully aware of the power of the diabolic zeal of those who are spreading Communism, but that he had confidence in the conquering zeal of the Jocists.

In a letter dated August 19, 1935, from Castel Gandolfo, to His Eminence Cardinal Van Roey, His Holiness Pius XI, wrote: "In thinking of the J.O.C. Congress on August 25, 1935, our heart exults with joy and rises gratefully towards God. . . . Stopping for an instant today, to survey the road already trodden, and to consider the work already done, the J.O.C. cannot but recognize the power of God . . ."

Catholic Women and Modern Problems

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*Commencement Address to the Graduates of Notre Dame College,
Staten Island, N. Y., June 3, 1937*

I SHOULD like first of all, in my few brief remarks, to offer my congratulations to you women of the graduating class of Notre Dame. I do not know, of course, what special difficulties each of you has had to meet and overcome in order to achieve the honor that is yours today, but I know that the road all of you have traversed cannot have been an easy one and that your presence here, at the end of that road, means that you have been formed into an elite and cultivated group of American women. In saying this I measure my words: you are precisely that, an elite group, for it has been your fortunate privilege to be formed in maturity by a college that is integrally part of that great universal thing, the Church, which is the guardian not only of divine truth, but of all the secular arts and learning that are native and proper to the human spirit. You have not been led, therefore, into those twisted and sectarian paths of thought, which, if they do not actually bring us to the bankruptcy of reason and despair of the soul, must at least alienate us in some measure from the authentic culture of the western world.

Hence it is that you have not been formed to believe that the culture of Athens and Rome, of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, of Dante and St. Thomas Aquinas, of Michelangelo and St. Thomas More, of Bossuet, of Newman, has passed to make way for the culture of Moscow, Berlin, and Hollywood. Nor have you been taught that all which is of major significance in the world wherein we of this moment in history find ourselves dates, say, from the eighteenth century and the Industrial Revolution. No, you have not been indoctrinated with that very commonly held belief of today,

that our great civilization was really created only the day before yesterday by a few generations of atheists. Rather have you been kept in touch with that one living corporate thing whose memory goes back to our foundations and whose experience is the sum of all experience. I do not know how worthy you have been of this good fortune, nor how acutely you have been conscious of being Roman citizens in a barbarian world; but it is as such that I salute and congratulate you today.

I do not mean, however, to flatter you unduly, but intend rather to say here what may reasonably be expected from a group of young women going out into the modern social world from a college such as this. In that social world there is a much greater latitude of action and opportunity for you than was offered to young women not so many years ago, for today women are called, or at least they will insist upon going, out of the private spheres of life into the general public and community life to a far greater extent than was the custom a generation or two ago. They are active in several of the professions and in the business world; they teach, they write, they enter public life; they are of the community as well as of the home and the cloister. They have, therefore, more numerous responsibilities and, if not a stronger, certainly a more widely diffused influence in the general life of society than they formerly had.

Now into that community you will go, scattering widely in various walks of life, but each of you wearing, I trust, bravely and proudly, the badge of what this college represents. And how well you wear that badge will determine the measure of justification Notre Dame shall have in her daughters. Now just that, the wearing of this badge, is what may rightly be expected of you. And to drop the metaphor, I mean that one may reasonably look for you to exert, to the limit of your ability and in whatever spheres of life you may be drawn, a twofold influence of the greatest worth: an influence that is on the one hand resistant to certain destructive forces at work in contemporary society, and on the other hand, of positive and constructive effect in the most fundamental realm of social life.

The destructive forces to which I refer are well known and press upon us wherever we turn. They originate in and thrive upon lies, and particularly the kind of lies that you

have been educated to recognize, expose, and refute. I could hardly even begin to list them here, but some of them are these: that there are no laws of life, that nothing is either right or wrong but thinking makes it so; that there is no responsibility, that one's life is utterly and absolutely one's own; that modernity is always to be equated with enlightenment, and that a fad or fashion of the moment is somehow always superior to a virtue that is of the past; that the main business of life is the pursuit of pleasure; that sex needs no special safeguards but is on all fours with any other natural inclination such as eating or sleeping; that human beings require liberty but not discipline, etc., etc. These are but a few of the lies of modern paganism which are disproved by the whole experience of western civilization; they are the lies which no one acquainted with our history has any excuse for believing; and yet they are the lies which, in flat defiance of the whole remembered record of our past, are told us day in and day out by the fashionable "broadcast minds" busy at the work of poisoning the wells of modern culture. To disbelieve and deny these lies, not, of course, to overcome them and the currents of corruption which they generate, but to face and oppose them, each in your own sphere of life, that, I say, is an influence you can reasonably be expected to exert, and in exerting it, to diminish in some measure all that is evil and meretricious in the culture of our age.

Now the more positive and constructive influence which should be yours is the filling of a great void that has come in modern society: a void that has arisen in the place of genuinely private spheres of life. If our social community is ill today, as all will agree that it is, I am sure that this is so very largely because too many of us are living too much in it rather than in the lesser autonomies that constitute the community; or to put it another way, that our public life is suffering from a want of private life; that those sovereignties in the social order, the home, the family, the secluded retreats where human beings are formed and may come to know themselves, where they may reflect and take counsel with themselves in security and moral freedom, that these private sovereignties have been falling away, the while we all seem to become more and more simply individuated members of one uniform mass community.

Everyone, surely, has sensed in some measure the dissolution of old private autonomies, for the collectivist tendency of our age is by no means revealed only in the social-economic demands of Left-wing revolutionaries. We may see it in mass entertainment, in radio and films, in the press and dress fashions, and many other aspects of contemporary culture. The general drift of the age seems to be toward stripping the human being of everything save his status of membership in the State, destroying his small empire of privacy, isolating him naked before public power; wherefore we seem to be transforming gradually a federation of private, personal, family, group and small corporate sovereignties into one standardized mass community, and, I hardly need add, governed necessarily by that thing which is called the Totalitarian State.

That is the kind of tyranny which we see exemplified in several contemporary political societies, for it is upon this social tendency, this decay of private sovereignties, that despotism feeds. Wipe out the smaller sovereignties; fuse all together in one mass, and that mass will be brought easily to submit to whatever master has the will to power. This indeed is the modern formula for creating a tyranny. And why is this corruption of the private spheres of human life? Surely you can read the answer on all sides if you look with a critical eye. You see it in that emptiness of the soul which leads so large a number of poor persons constantly to be seeking forms of escape from themselves; having nothing substantial within, no inner resources stored up, no hidden life with God, they must ever be going out into the world to be filled. They are hollow, and far from being formed to desire the lost autonomies, they know only the desire for the exact opposite of them; and you can see them feeding like hunger-maddened slaves on one sensation after another, which of course do not satisfy, but only awaken new insatiable appetites. They cannot endure to be quiet and alone, and they have exactly inverted the deep truth which our religion teaches and the world today seems to deny: that man was not made for society, but society was made for man.